





Fig 2. [1]

The picture shows the Elephant on the top left and the Cow on the bottom right. Re-reading the story, I noticed that the animals mentioned in the myth occur roughly in the first quarter of the lunar mansion cycle. These are the animals of the section from the Cow to the Female Serpent in Figure 1. According to the creation myth, creatures of all kinds are continually being formed in the process of the churning of the Milky Ocean, as if from some kind of prehistoric chaos. It is from this Ocean that the four-tusked elephant is lifted, which, according to one version of the saga, has seven trunks. This is also where the Seven-headed white magic horse appears. These two animals are at the end-beginning point of the (natural) year and of creation, and are characterized by two numbers (7 and 4) that are important for the two main calendars of ancient peoples, the lunar and the solar calendars. Even the Bible touches on this question. Referring back to the story of the multiplication of the bread, Jesus asks his apostles the question:

„19 When I broke the five loaves for the five thousand, how many basketfuls of pieces did you pick up?”  
 “Twelve,” they replied.

20 “And when I broke the seven loaves for the four thousand, how many basketfuls of pieces did you pick up?”

They answered, “Seven.”

” (Mark 8:19-21)

The text is slightly cryptic, we should think of four instead of four thousand, and five instead of five thousand. In paragraph 19, the number 5 has a double meaning, but here I will only deal with one of the interpretations that interests us. In the Caucasus, but also in Minoan symbolism, the system of the five-season division of the year has been preserved or can be identified, and this may be referred to paragraph 19, which represents the structure of the solar year as divisible into 12 months and perhaps five seasons (a "schematic" season of nearly 72 days - in fact more like 73, but as a prime number it is "wrongly divisible" - is also an important number in the Bible). This point is definitely about the solar calendar because of the number 12. Paragraph 20 refers to the lunar calendar, as the "schematic" lunar month consists of 4 weeks, each of which is 7 days long. The 365 day year, by the way, consists of 13 such lunar months and one day ( $365=13 \times 28 + 1$ ). The number seven has many other meanings in Hindu culture, reflecting the many "sevens" of the world, from the seven days, the  $3 \times 7$  world levels, the seven sacred rivers and cities, the seven classical

planets, to the seven levels of consciousness, or the seven chakras.

The calendar, both a celestial gift, is also depicted in other mythologies. In one of Herodotus' Scythian origin tales, four golden treasures fall to earth, apparently representing the four seasons [3]. In the Caucasian Nart epic, the eight "sectors" of the year are also gifted by the gods. This is the subject of the saga "What the inhabitants of the sky gifted to Soslan", which describes eight deities representing the eight sectors of the year. Note that the representation of the solar year by eight deities also exists in Hindi mythology.

Let's move on to the next actor in the Indian creation myth. After the cow and the elephant, the stallion (Male Horse) is seen in the nakshatra circle, and it is aligned with Aries, the spring equinox, as shown in Figure 1. Uccaihsravas - the magic horse - appears in other tellings as a black-tailed white horse, or a half-white, half-black-tailed horse. In both cases, the animal is said to be at the boundary of the brighter and darker half of the year, at the spring (or autumn) equinox. The color of its tail is disputed by Vinata and Kadru. They are the parents of the birds (referring to the brighter half of the year) and the snakes (referring to the darker half of the year), the ones who enclose the stallion in the calendar. Vinata and Kadru are the wives of Kashyapa. He has 13 wives, which is the number of schematic lunar months in a year. Looking at the calendar numbers together, multiplying four (number of tusks) by seven (number of heads, trunks) and 13 equals 364. Adding 1 to 364 gives the most typical number of days in a year. This scheme is not unique. The calendar system of the silver plate found at Bolsaja Anikovskaja near Perm also divides the year essentially into  $(13 \times 2) \times (7 \times 2) = 13 \times 4 \times 7$  with the addition of a few double weeks of modified length (13 or 15 days), but there is also a representation surviving from Minos that probably contains this calendar [2]. After the Stallion in the nakshatra system comes the bull elephant. The female elephant and the bull elephant are close to each other, on both sides of the vernal equinox - before and after - so the two of them combined are associated with the vernal equinox too. Following the storyline, it is worth noting that as a churning rod, Mount Mandara is placed on the back of Kurmü, the mythical Giant Turtle (the incarnation of Vishnu), which played a role in bringing up treasures lost at the time of the Flood (According to V. V. Napolski, this type of "diving animal" is a well-known central figure of a very old Eurasian-North American creation myth). The snake Vasuki is used as a rope (Figure 2), which is found in male and female form in the 4th and 5th positions of the nakshatra circle. After the bull elephant in position 2, there is another animal - the female sheep (ewe) - which belongs to the section representing the myth, whose role, together with that of the Turtle, will be clarified later. The Sures and the Asuras (gods and demons, a duality which also appears in the diving-animal creation myths) pull and release the head and tail of the snake Vasuki, basically with the intention of churning out and fishing out the drink of immortality, which is brought to the surface in a pitcher (Kumbh in Sanskrit). The story is symmetrical in the sense that, according to one version of the myth, the poisons of the previous world (a reference to the cyclical nature of creation) also appear in another pitcher as an "anti-life elixir" that could destroy the new world, and are partially swallowed by the merciful Shiva. The main purpose of the churning, the immortality, is somewhere a parallel of the eternal functioning, the endless renewal of cycles, which is after all only an allotment of the gods, the demons (and of course the humans) are left out of it, because, like in the biblical story, they believe in the temptress (here, instead of Eve, it is Mōhini - Vishnu's incarnation), which makes them mortal. The introductory part of the Hindu myth also depicts the "expulsion from paradise" - the sage, cursed Indra and the Devas, and condemned them to lose their great power and fortune. Otherwise, in the introductory part, there is a passage where a beautiful garland falls from the trunk of Indra's elephant to the ground, which can also be seen as a celestial gift embodied in a calendar cycle. The motif of the sinful woman probably reflects the matriarchal-patriarchal transition. The traditional narrative tends to represent the passing of periods by the death of the person who embodies the period (e.g. the Sun-Hero kills his twelve children and then commits suicide - the 12 months and the year pass). In the Bible, mortality can be linked, by this logic, to the passing of the matriarchy represented by Eve. The pitcher of the drink of immortality (Khumba) is traditionally associated with Aquarius, which is also called Khumba. Every 12 years, in the year of Aquarius, the main Hindu religious festival, Purna Kumbh Mela (in the month of Aries and at the new moon), is observed, when bathing in the sacred waters is performed to purify rivers as well as the human soul. Every  $12 \times 12$  years, in the year of "Aquarius of Aquarius", the even bigger Maha Kumbh Mela, the world's biggest religious event, is observed.

Returning to our story and the animals of the nakshatra cycle, as it has been shown, at the end of the *Cow-Female Snake* creation section, the two snakes (male and female) represent Vasuki as the "churning rope". According to the version of the story in the Bhagavata Purana, the snake, at every jerk, causes a fire that destroys the previous World. The fire is finally extinguished by Kurmü, the turtle, to which we will return. The destructive fire is encoded by the 3rd position Female Sheep of the nakshatra system, which is



revealed by a closer examination of the nakshatra's properties. The Female Sheep is located directly in front of the Male Serpent, just at his head, at the point where the fire is launched. As an animal, the female sheep is paired with ram, which as "Aries" is a fiery sign in the zodiac. According to Indian tradition, the ruling planet of the nakshatra Female Sheep, is the Sun, which has a fiery quality (all lunar houses have a ruling planet), and most importantly, its patron is Agni, the god of fire. Moving forward in the story, the fire-extinguishing Turtle is encoded by the yellow cross in Figure 1, where the Female Dog (Bitch) is one of the four legs of the turtle, standing immediately after the two snake-nakshatras symbolizing Vasuki. This can be explained as follows. According to the story, the churning rod is Mount Mandara, on top of which the North Star, the axis of rotation of the sky, is placed. This means that the mountain plays the role of the so-called World Column (World Axis), which tradition says holds and rotates the sky above us at night. Thus, the Turtle that supports Mount Mandara (the World Axis) viewed from above in relation to the plane of the nakshatra circle. According to the story, the turtle rakes out the fire by splashing the ocean with its four legs. From what has been said, it can be assumed that behind the yellow cross in the picture is actually the Giant Turtle. I must, of course, say something about what this yellow cross might hide, which is part of two symbolic subsystems. In the Indian nakshatra system there are 13 pairs of animals and one single animal - the Mongoose. The Chinese system is similar, except that instead of the two sexes succeeding each other, more distant "relatives" (such as the Dog and the Wolf) are arranged in strict order, in groups of two and three, according to the "4x(2+2+3)" scheme. The 13 Hindu animal pairs are arranged in a more irregular way than the Chinese, but still have a kind of system that is used for a different type of coding. Observe, that in most cases, males and females of the same animal are either placed directly next to each other (marked with green brackets in the Figure) or second (pairs marked with purple brackets). There are, however, two pairs that are opposite each other, "diagonally", forming a cross. This is a pair of axes, consisting by the *female dog - male dog* and the *ox-cow* axes (the ox is a gelding male, so basically male). They represent the four legs of the Turtle, which of course is a deity as a "temporary" incarnation of Vishnu, and as such is not directly related to the earthly sense of calendar circle, being "below" it, while Vishnu is "above" it, sitting on top of the churning rod (the calendar system of serious artifacts always has a earthly meaning, and usually also includes a transcendental - divine - system, brought here by avatars). If we remove the pairs marked with the purple and green brackets and the opposite pairs and the unpaired mongoose from the total nakshatra circle, we are left with a total of two pairs of animals. Ram is located five houses away from Female Sheep and Mares is four houses away from Stallion. This third kind of angle may also have a special meaning. In Hindu mythology, the castes are also creations, and are mentioned in the oldest Veda, in the Rigveda. Hence the sacral creation line of *cow-horse-sweep-goat-man* is known. The first four of these are sacred animals (sacrificial animals) and are also the markers of the castes. The Cow belongs to the supreme, priestly caste (Brahmin), the Horse to the cavalry-military caste (Kshatriya), the Lamb to the maintenance merchant-industrial-agricultural caste (Vaishya), the Goat to the servant caste (Shudra). Non-caste persons (untouchables, Pariahs) have no sacred animals, and only the first three castes can study the Vedas. It is no coincidence that only the first three animals are included in the "creation sector" of the nakshatra's cycle, as the others would probably not be entitled to study it either... The supreme animal is the sacred cow which is the starting animal of the 'creation sector', while its pair (the Ox) is located opposite it. The second caste is represented by the seven-headed magic horse (Horse=Kshatriya), distinguished from the Mare four houses away, and the third caste animal (Sheep=Vaishya) has one animal also in the "creation sector" and one five houses away. The three upper castes are "two-born", they are distinguished by a special placement. Of the pairs in special positions (other than those marked with brackets or the Mongoose), only the dog pair is not caste-marking, and they are probably highlighted as the starting sign of the Eastern zodiac (the vernal equinox, the beginning of the natural year, one of the junctions of the lighter and darker half of the year).

The turtle's legs divide the nakshatra circle into three distinctive sections (sectors). The first one (Cow-Female Snake) has already been dealt with, it contains the creation myth (up to the 5th position), and from this sector the diagonal and the two arcs, representing the three two-born castes, start. Then, from the Female Dog to the Ox, come the domestic animals and animals around the house, roughly in order of distance from man, and the latter principle is still somewhat in force in the third major section, the wild animals, there more in a geographical sense. The starting animal in the sector "domestic animals - animals around the house" is the Dog (position 6), man's main friend. Next comes the more independent pair of cats (7th and 9th position), with the insertion of Ram (8th position), which seems to have been elevated to this position as part of the sacred pair of caste-marking animals. The Rat (positions 10-11) also lives in man's environment, sometimes further away, even in the canals of the city, but with the Mouse as its chinese form,

it will still visit the man in his home or around his house. Not the Ox (position 12), he lives further away, in the barn. The third big section give the wild animals. At the beginning of the row, the bison (positions 13 and 15) can be considered, because there is a domesticated version too. Another exception in the wild animal section is the Male Dog, although in the steppe its famous alternate is the Wolf, and in the Chinese lunar mansion row there is also a Wild Dog, but of the caste marker pair, the Mare is also included here (perhaps because it would have overloaded the 'domesticated' line and, if included there, would have broken the geometric symmetry of the 'caste markers'. Two internal organizing principles can be observed in the beast row. There is a characteristic "height coding" that follows the annual changes of light on the lower semicircle. The unpaired Mongoose (felid, position 21) is the smallest animal, and stands at the winter solstice (Capricorn), at the shortest day, at the place of smallest light. On either side of it are the two - slightly larger - Monkeys (positions 20 and 22), followed symmetrically by the even bigger animals. At the end of the row are the more geographically distant Lions (23rd and 25th), as well as Mare (24th). The Lion and the Horse are not so much distant from Indian man as they are close to the sacred animals of the 'creation sector', since of all the Hindu lunar animals only these two have winged 'near-divine' forms, which are located near the main sacred animal, the Cow. To understand this, of course, we need to know that on the steppe, but also elsewhere, the bird is the representative of the sky, the winged creature embodying the first ancestor, which stands at the head of the genealogical rows of totems ("Bird-Deer-Horse-Man" for the Scythians, "Bird-Beer-Man" or "Bird-Rabbit-Man" for the Siberian fratriarchal society, "Bird-Lion-Man" for the Middle East or pre-Asia).

The creation myth has specific astrological aspects. There is talk about the Sun and the Moon dancing around the North Star, that is, their celestial movement. The gods and demons who drag the serpent embody the struggle between light and darkness, and the cyclical form of this movement corresponds to the solar or annual alternation or wavering of darkness and light. If the snake, which also rakes out fire in the story, is considered a dragon (they are also conjoined in the Chinese lunar cycle, the nakshatras "dragon" and "horned snake" being in the zodiacal sign of the Dragon), the head and tail of the snake in the story become the head and tail of the Dragon, which are the astrological actors with the same power as the planets. They are the intersections of the Moon's orbit and the ecliptic. These two astrological 'quasi-planets' are also associated with a phenomenon that was frightening to the old man, suggesting the end of the world, or at least the end of an age, such as the lunar or solar eclipse. This phenomenon occurs when the Dragon's Tail or the Dragon's Head is within 12 degrees of the New Moon or the Full Moon. They talk about a dragon because the Sun or Moon is always captured by the ruler of the dark hemisphere, by the Dragon, which is why there is an eclipse... By the way, it is from a version of the churning myth that we may know about the punishment of the trickster Asura - Rahu - who hides between the Sun and the Moon, whose severed head has become a planet and occasionally engorges the Sun or the Moon, causing a solar or lunar eclipse (Rahu is the Dragon's Head, Ketu the Dragon's Tail). The older system of seven planets is thus completed by the lunar nodes - the Dragon's Tail and the Dragon's Head. By the way, the system of 27 nakshatras cannot directly incorporate the seven planetary system (27 is not divisible by 7), so Indian astrology works with 9 "planets". The 27 nakshatras in the direction from Stallion (Male Horse) to Elephant Bull (Male Elephant) have the Ketu-Venus-Sun-Moon-Mars-Rahu-Jupiter-Saturn-Mercury sequence as the "ruling planet", repeated three times. Note that the Chinese lunar mansion system of 28 is may be also derived from the (four seasons) x (7 planets) principle. There, each lunar mansion is assigned to a ruling planet. There are only four of these: from Little Monkey to Wolf (Aquarius-Aries) - Venus; from Pangolin to Unicorn (Taurus-Cancer) - Mercury; from Leopard to Horned Snake (Leo-Libra) - Jupiter; and from Worm to Wild Dog (Scorpio-Capricorn) - Mars. Within each of these groups of seven mansions, the co-ruler is the planet of the same number in the Saturn-Venus-Jupiter-Mercury-Mars-Moon-Sun series. For example, the ruling planet of the mansion Horse is Mars, with Mercury as its co-ruler. There are also other astrological references in the Creation Myth. The number of gifts lifted from the Ocean is 14, which refers to the half of the schematic lunar month. In one depiction of the myth, the total number of Suras and Asuras is 18, which roughly corresponds to the lunar node cycle. It was mentioned that the Myth of Churning involves Shiva. Shiva's 108 dances are the link between the myth and the nakshatra circle through the 108 padas. In the Angkor Thom's sculpture system, which depicts the myth of Churning, there are 54 Suras and 54 Asuras, a total of 108, which again refers to the Pada circle.

In summary, despite its calendar character, or more precisely, in addition to the calendar character, the 27-station Hindu Nakshatra cycle includes the Myth of the Churning of the Ocean of Milk (creation myth), domestic, near-domestic and wild animals reflecting cosmic, social and transcendental principles. In

general, steppe artworks contain a calendar layer (of earthly meaning) and a transcendental layer (describing the transition between the thisworld and the other world). The nakshatra system has the same structure. A special feature of the system may be the hidden creation myth, and the fact that the role of the steppe totem lines describing the transition between the thisworld and the other world (which, among other things, represent the mythical genealogy) is played here by the two-born castes.

#### Literature, illustrations

1. [https://hu.m.wikipedia.org/wiki/F%C3%A1jl:Kurma,\\_the\\_tortoise\\_incarnation\\_of\\_Vishnu.jpg](https://hu.m.wikipedia.org/wiki/F%C3%A1jl:Kurma,_the_tortoise_incarnation_of_Vishnu.jpg); Public domain
2. Knossian seal impression from MM I period; A. Evans, *The Palace of Minos*, Vol. II:1, Fig. 111.
3. Waszlavik László: Символика генеалогического предания скифов записанного Геродотом, Academia.edu